



Thank You RRMRC Volunteers

Pandemic Flu Summit

by Kathy Hatter, Emergency Planner

The global health community continues to track the H5N1 avian influenza virus, which has now spread from Asia to Europe. Although the virus primarily infects birds, concern that H5N1 could mutate and spread from person to person exists. If that occurred it could produce an influenza pandemic.

An influenza pandemic, regarded by many as the most significant public health emergency caused by a naturally occurring pathogen, occurs when a new influenza virus emerges to which people have little or no immunity. The virus could rapidly circle the globe causing millions to become sick or die. Health care resources would be stretched to the limit, and both government and the private sector would face challenges in providing essential services. Workforces will be dramatically reduced as one in four persons may become ill, and others will be absent to care for children or sick family members.

The Virginia Department of Health has been leading efforts in the Commonwealth to educate the public and provide local governments and decision makers with tools and tips they can use to prepare for the possibility of a pandemic. On March 23, 2006, the Virginia Pandemic Influenza Summit brought together federal, state, and local leaders at the Greater Richmond Convention Center to discuss Virginia's pandemic influenza planning. Following presentations, several breakout sessions facilitated discussion among community leaders.

On Wednesday, June 21, 2006, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (RRHD) will host a local Pandemic Influenza Summit to raise awareness of the potential threat of a

pandemic influenza and to encourage local preparedness. Community leaders, including RRMRC volunteers, are encouraged to attend. Attendees will be asked to relay the information provided to the local organizations and businesses they are involved in, and encourage and guide their stakeholders in pandemic influenza planning.

The summit will include an overview of the current situation and breakout sessions on key areas of interest identified at the state summit. In addition, community leaders and local government will describe their roles and activities and be available to answer questions.

Remember, there are many things you can do to prepare for an influenza pandemic. Begin with storing a two week supply of food and water. Make plans to have an extra supply of prescription drugs, and have nonprescription drugs such as cough and cold medicine and stomach remedies available. Reduce the spread of illness in your community by washing your hands frequently with soap and water, and teach your children to do the same. Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and dispose of used tissues immediately. If you are sick, stay home and keep sick children home from school and daycare.

Currently there is not a flu pandemic, and Avian Flu has not developed in the United States. However, it is important to plan for the possibility. No-one can predict when this might occur, but investing the time now to prepare can reduce stresses on our community in such an event. For additional information, please go to www.pandemicflu.gov.

As an RRMRC Member Can You...

-Describe the procedure and steps necessary to protect the health, safety, and overall well-being of yourself, your family, the team, and the community?
-Document that your personal and family preparedness plan is in place?
-Describe the chain of command?
-Describe the RRMRC's role in public health and/or emergency response and its application to a given incident?
-Describe your communication role with response partners, media, general public, and others.
-Describe the impact of an event on the mental health of yourself, responders, and others?
-Demonstrate your ability to follow procedures for assignment, activation, reporting, and deactivation?

Operation and Management Manual Ready for Pick-up

The Operation and Management Manual will be provided to all new volunteers at their orientation.

RRMRC volunteers who have previously attended orientation will receive their manual at the next training they attend, or they can pick up the O&M manual at the RRMRC office.

Please carefully review this manual. It is full of pertinent information. If you have any questions email them to rrmrc@vdh.virginia.gov.

Medical Reserve Corps Receives the Mitretek Innovations Award in Homeland Security

On April 18, at the National Medical Reserve Corps Conference and Training, National MRC Commander Robert Tosatto announced the Medical Reserve Corps was one of the five finalists receiving the Mitretek Innovations Award in Homeland Security. This award identifies, explores, and highlights creative and effective government and public-private solutions—and the leaders behind them—to the nation's homeland security concerns.

Surgeon General, Richard H. Carmona was the keynote speaker. He stated "We are a better and stronger nation because of the Medical Reserve Corps."

In the last three years the MRC has grown from 42 units to 420 units in the United States.

Volunteers learning to be prepared to volunteer!

Watch Out for Those Pesky Mosquitoes

by April Achter, Epidemiologist

Mosquitoes are more than just pesky. They can also spread diseases, including West Nile Virus (WNV). WNV was first documented in the United States in 1999 during an outbreak of meningitis and encephalitis in New York City. Since its introduction, it has become established throughout much of the United States, and has spread into Canada and Mexico.

An estimated 80% of people infected with the virus show no symptoms. Approximately 20% of infections cause a clinical presentation known as West Nile Virus Fever, which is characterized by an acute onset of fever, and can be accompanied by, but not limited to, headache, muscle aches, fatigue and joint pain. Rarely can it cause severe illness, including encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) or polio-like paralysis. People over the age of 50 are at greater risk of severe illness. People with mild illness DO NOT need to be tested for WNV because there is no specific treatment for the disease.

The best defense against WNV is to protect yourself from biting mosquitoes and to eliminate mosquito breeding areas. There are many things you can do to reduce your risk of contracting WNV. Controlling the mosquito population and preventing mosquito bites are the most important steps that you can take. For example, remove standing water where mosquitoes can breed. Turn over or remove containers in your yard where water collects, such as old tires, potted plant trays, buckets, and toys. Clean out birdbaths and wading pools once per week. Clean roof gutters and downspout screens. If possible, stay indoors when mosquitoes are biting. While outdoors, wear long, loose, and light-colored clothing and use insect repellants safely.

Keep Us Informed!

Have you moved, changed your email address or phone numbers, updated your professional or drivers' licenses, CPR, or first aid cards? Please make sure we have the correct information on file

QUARTERLY QUIZ

1. Where can you receive your Operation and Management Manual?
2. What carries West Nile Virus?
3. What can you do to protect yourself from West Nile Virus?
4. What is the first RRMRC award you can earn?
5. What will cause a Pandemic?

Want to Join or Learn More?

Contact Information:

RRMRC Volunteer
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RRMRC@vdh.virginia.gov
Website:
rrmrc.vdh.virginia.gov

- **32** volunteers joined the RRMRC for a total of **327**
- **32** volunteers received orientation for a total of **256**
- **140** volunteers received training
- **Carole Roddy**, and **Michael Roddy** volunteered a total of **36** hours in the Office and Richard Vento volunteered **8** hours as training assistance

Volunteers Recognized with Awards

- ⇒ Attend 4 trainings or a combination of 4 trainings, drills, or events and earn a Medical Reserve Corps pin.

Volunteers who have received their Medical Reserve Corps pin to date are:

Brian Atkin	Carole Roddy
Ellen Berg	James Smith
Tom Holbach	Kim Smith
Robert Leahmann	Johnny Stolzhaus
Lisa Pendleton	Judith Tolhurst
David Range	Richard Vento



- ⇒ Attend 12 trainings or combination of trainings, drills, and events and earn a RRMRC flashlight for your equipment bag.

Volunteers who have received their RRMRC flashlight to date are: Richard Vento

- ⇒ Attend 24 trainings or combination of trainings, drills, and events and earn a first aid kit for your equipment bag.

Attend the next training to find out if you have already earned an award.

Special Recognition

As a special recognition for added service, the national and state MRC presented a letter, backpack and t-shirt to the following volunteers: Carole Roddy, Kimberly Smith, and Richard Vento for assisting in the office and with trainings; and to Martha Neff-Smith for spending three weeks working with the Katrina disaster.

There are still three more Special Awards, who will receive theirs next?

Answers to Quiz on Page 2

- Question 1 At your next training or pick up at the RRMRC office.
 Question 2 Mosquitoes
 Question 3 Eliminate mosquito breeding areas by removing standing water. Wear protective clothing and repellent.
 Question 4 A Medical Reserve Corps pin.
 Question 5 If the virus mutates and becomes readily transmissible among humans, it could possibly produce an influenza pandemic.

Orientation, Trainings, and Drills

Orientation must be attended prior to attending a training. Starting in September the RRMRC orientation will be held every other month. The Orientation will be 1.5 hours, followed by a 1.5 hour training on Biological Agents. All volunteers who have not attended this class should attend one of the Biological Agents trainings.

Orientation and Biological Agents training

- Tuesday, September 29 6-9 pm
- Thursday, November 30 6-9 pm

Monthly Training topics:

- Tuesday, June 27 (Time Change) 6:30- 8:30 pm
Epidemiology 201 (prerequisite is Public Health 101 Epidemiology for the non epidemiologist) or Forensic epidemiology
- Saturday, July 22 9 am -12 noon
Orientation & Family and Personal Preparedness
- Wednesday, August 23 7-9 pm
Pandemic Influenza
- Wednesday, September 13 7-9 pm
Isolation and Quarantine
- Week of October 23rd - Date TBD
Drill
- November - Date TBD
Psychological First Aid 7-9 pm

Remember all volunteers are required to attend at least one training session and one drill per calendar year.

Heartsavers CPR Class

A class will be held on a Saturday during the summer. The size will be limited. If you are interested in attending contact the office to be notified of the date.

Basic First Aid Class & Disaster Shelter Overview

Saturday, July 8 8am-1pm

The class will be consist of Basic First Aid from 8-12. The Disaster Shelter Overview will be 12-1. You are welcome to bring a bag lunch to eat while the Overview class is being held. The class will be limited to 20 people.

Epidemiology Class Sequence

To become approved to assist with epidemiology, volunteers will need to complete the following sequence of classes

- Forensic or Public Health 101 (epi for the non-epi)
- Epidemiology 201
- Practical epidemiology

Do You Like to Write?

The RRMRC office is looking for volunteers to write articles for the newsletter, Culpeper Minutes and local newspapers. Editing will be done by the staff.



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DATES TO REMEMBER

June 27, 2006	
Training Topic:	6:30-8:30 pm
Epi 201	
July 8, 2006	8 am-1 pm
Basic 1st Aid & Disaster Shelter Overview	
July 22, 2006	
Orientation:	9:00-10 am
Training Topic:	10:00-12 noon
Family and Personal Preparedness	
August 23, 2006	
Training Topic:	7-9 pm
Pandemic Influenza	
September 13, 2006	7-9 pm
Training Topic:	
Isolation and Quarantine	
September 29, 2006	
Orientation:	6-7:30 pm
Training Topic:	7:30-9 pm
Category A Biologic Agents	

Vision

Volunteers
Protecting Local
Public Health

Mission

To serve the counties of
Culpeper, Fauquier,
Madison, Orange and
Rappahannock by
establishing teams of
volunteers to strengthen
the public health
infrastructure and
improve Emergency
Preparedness
and Response.